

# Pentwater Bible Church

*Hebrews Message 44*

*November 11, 2018*



Jesus and the Lamb by Yorkshire\_rose

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# Pentwater Bible Church

The Book of Hebrews

Message Forty-Four

THE CHANGELESS JESUS

November 11, 2018

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THE LORD JESUS

Hebrews 13:1–6

*<sup>1</sup>Let brotherly love continue. <sup>2</sup>Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. <sup>3</sup>Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body. <sup>4</sup>Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge. <sup>5</sup>Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. <sup>6</sup>So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me. (KJV).*

This entire chapter is meant to conclude the book to the Hebrews of the first century Church. This chapter contains final exhortations to the audience for them to make a final break with rabbinic Judaism. The unchanging Lord Jesus remains our great High Priest who gave us the Perfect Sacrifice of Himself. The entire world needs the salvation that is only available through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus (John 14:6; Acts 4:12; I Corinthians 15:1–4; etc.).

The concluding chapter to the book of Hebrews contains three exhortations to the first century Jewish audience. Those are:

1. Social obligations (Hebrews 13:1–6)
2. Religious obligations (Hebrews 13:7–17)
3. Personal obligations (Hebrews 13:18–25)

BROTHERLY LOVE

Hebrews 13:1

*<sup>1</sup>Let brotherly love continue (KJV)*

The Latin Vulgate version adds, *in you*; or among you, as a church and society of Christians. We are first to love those who are in the same spiritual relationship to God, as their Father, to Christ, as the first-born among many brethren, that is our neighbors. This included the partakers of the same grace, that is those who are born again. This love is to be universally extending to all the saints in all nations and areas of the world. It cannot be put on or insincere, but must be the same as Christ loved us. Because when it is genuine, it is active such that is manifested in praying with and for one another; in bearing one another's burdens; in forgiving one another; in admonishing

one another in love; in building up each other in the most holy faith; and in challenging one another to be active in the use of our spiritual gifts for the Body of Believers. This is how we exhibit evidence of our regeneration.

The love of God and Christ continues to work through us as the brotherly loving relation between the saints. Without this, genuine churches with bonafide born again believers and pastors can't continue very long. This is not to say that the grace itself departs, that can never be lost; but the exercise and increase of it can indeed be lost through neglect, mis- guidance, heresy, and general apostasy.

The verses which most exemplifies the defining of the brethren or neighbors as in the New Testament is found in Matthew chapter 22.

Matthew 22:36-40

*<sup>36</sup>Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" <sup>37</sup>Jesus replied: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. <sup>38</sup>This is the first and greatest commandment. <sup>39</sup>And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. <sup>40</sup> All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments'" (KJV).*

In this section of Scripture, the Lord is responding to a challenging question from one of the religious lawyers trying to trap Him in a theological issue related to the Law, and Christ refers them back to the Mosaic Law of Leviticus 19:18 where the "neighbor" is narrowly defined as another Jew.

It helps to remember that the New Testament was written by and first given to the Jews. In fact, Christ made the declaration early in His ministry that He had come only for "*the lost sheep of the house of Israel*" (Matthew 10:6; 15:24). Paul tells us that the Gospel is to go "*to the Jew first and then to the Gentile*" (Romans 1:16). Stephen, in his dissertation to the High Priest in the book of Acts, presents the term "neighbor" or "brethren" as a fellow Hebrew.

Acts 7:24-25

*<sup>24</sup>And seeing one [of them] suffer wrong, he defended [him], and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian: <sup>25</sup>For he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood not (KJV).*

Here Stephen speaking of Moses attempting to defend another Jew against an Egyptian, and he calls the Jew a "*brethren*". Fellow Christians are also referred to as "neighbors" in the New Testament (Romans 15:2; Ephesians 4:25; James 4:11-12). This is consistent with the context in which Jesus referenced Leviticus 19 while talking about fellow Christians. He means other Christians are "neighbors". Christ, in the same passage of Matthew 22 quoted above, told the lawyers that we must love God first and then love our neighbors the same way we love ourselves.

We must consider the context also of Christ's commandment to love one another as related in John's gospel.

John 13:34-35

*<sup>34</sup>A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. <sup>35</sup>By this shall all [men] know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another (KJV).*

As Christians we are commanded to have a love for one another. This is consistent with Christ's usage of loving our "neighbors" in Matthew 22:39. In John 13 He narrowly defines that the love we are to have for others is first to be directed to those in the Body of Christ. Others, being those outside the Christian community, will see our special relationship to one another and this should also be a reflection of how we honor God. The apostle John captures this subject in his first epistle. He demonstrates that a true believer loves the "brethren" (other believers).

1 John 3:14-16

*<sup>14</sup>We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not [his] brother abideth in death. <sup>15</sup>Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. <sup>16</sup>Hereby perceive we the love [of God], because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down [our] lives for the brethren (KJV).*

Again, this follows directly from the Matthew 22 passage in that Christ said the first commandment is to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength. The second is to love your neighbor the same way you love yourself. This is not a commandment to engage in being self-centered. He knows that with the sin nature still in us, we already love ourselves. The sin nature obviates the need for this commandment.

As far as loving our "neighbor", we must first love other believers. We are not commanded to hate those that harm us or do not believe in Christ Jesus. Instead, we are to offer God's love to the unbelieving community because we would like to see them become children of God as we have become. All people are made in the image of God and have worth, therefore we should treat them with concern and respect. That does not mean we engage in extensive fellowship with them. *For bad company corrupts good morals* (I Corinthians 15:33). The love Christians have for each other is unique, and serves as a special living testimony to our connection to the Lord Jesus and the salvation that He has given to us.

ANGELS ARE AMONG US

Hebrews 13:2

*<sup>2</sup>Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares (KJV).*

We should be kind to strangers in our speech and mannerisms. When someone visits our fellowship, we should be kind and extend an invitation to return. If possible invite them to a meal so we can entertain them. This can extend to missionaries, visitors and extended family of members visiting our fellowship. The duty is that of *Christian hospitality*. That which was commanded under the old covenant is repeated under the new: “*But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God*” (Leviticus 19:34; Deuteronomy 10:19, etc.). The Greek word for “entertain” is rendered “lodge” in Acts 10:18, 23, and Acts 28:7. In the days when this epistle was written inns were expensive and rife with pagan practices, criminals and others seeking to persecute Christians. Hence the extension of brotherly love to the other believers in this manner.

Another reason to love strangers is that *some have entertained angels unawares*. One person, for example, was Abraham (Genesis 18–19). Abraham entertained what he thought were three men but two of them were actually angels. They have manifested themselves as human men on many occasions provided in Scripture. The angel Gabriel appeared to Daniel and Mary. Angels appeared at the empty tomb and ascension of Jesus etc. This verse provides evidence that angels do indeed walk this earth at God’s direction. Quite often angels intervene to save us or bless us — although we aren’t even aware of it at the time. The Psalmist said that *God will give his angels charge over thee, To keep thee in all thy ways* (Psalm 91:11).

#### BELIEVERS IMPRISONED AND PERSECUTED

Hebrews 13:3

<sup>3</sup> *Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body (KJV).*

The apostle now identifies another obligation, which is empathy. He says to *Remember them that are in bonds*. The readers are to *remember* them in prayer and in other ways. Believers are to *remember* them *as bound with them*; to identify themselves which is empathy, with those who are in prison because of their faith. One example of this is Onesiphorus in 2 Timothy 1:16–18. They are to identify with, show sympathy to, and *remember* two groups—those who are in prison and those who are suffering adversity. There must be an empathizing fellowship with those who are suffering persecution for the faith. The reason for this empathizing fellowship is as follows: *as being yourselves also in the body*; it is needed because all believers are in the same Body of Believers. Some have served in prison ministries as a result of this command.

1 Corinthians 12:26

<sup>26</sup> *And whether one member suffereth, all the members suffer with it; or one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it (ASV, 1901).*

## THE SANCTITY OF MARRIAGE

Hebrews 13:4

*<sup>4</sup> Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge (KJV).*

The command to preserve the sanctity of marriage, is found in verse 4 *Marriage is honourable in all*. This means the married person must be faithful to his or her mate: *and let the bed be undefiled*. The Greek word used here for *bed* is not the normal Greek word for bed. The actual word used is *coite*, which is the origin of the English word “coitus.” The emphasis is not upon the bed itself but upon the sexual union between married partners on the bed. The emphasis is on sexual purity because God will judge *fornicators and adulterers*. The apostle gives an example of keeping the marriage within God’s proper bounds.

I Thessalonians 4:3–7

*<sup>3</sup>For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye abstain from fornication; <sup>4</sup>that each one of you know how to possess himself of his own vessel in sanctification and honor, <sup>5</sup>not in the passion of lust, even as the Gentiles who know not God; <sup>6</sup>that no man transgress, and wrong his brother in the matter: because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as also we forewarned you and testified. <sup>7</sup>For God called us not for uncleanness, but in sanctification (ASV, 1901).*

## CONTENTMENT

Hebrews 13:5–6

*<sup>5</sup> Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. <sup>6</sup> So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me. (KJV).*

This is a commandment to contentment, which is found in verses 5–6: Other translations explain verse five as stating *Be you free from the love of money*. This describes the character of the person; he must be free from materialism: *content with such things as ye have*. Money can never give security as God can. We are not guaranteed to have a lot of earthly possessions. He will provide as we need. He watches over us through His angels and gives us what we need.

The basis for this is God’s promise to provide their *every need* (Philippians 4:19). The apostle then cites two quotations from the Old Testament. The first quotation is taken from both Deuteronomy 31:6 and Joshua 1:5. Paul makes the point that God will not leave them. The second quotation is from Psalm 118:6 “*Jehovah is on my side; I will not fear: What can man do unto me?*” This quote is used to teach the believers that man cannot hurt them. In fact, the Lord Jesus emphasized this as recorded by Matthew.

Matthew 10:28

*<sup>28</sup>And be not afraid of them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell (ASV, 1901).*

We are not to fear other men. Any harm they can do to us is given by divine permission. When we carry our public and faithful administration of the Gospel and the will of Christ, in spite of all opposition, who can only take away a poor, frail, mortal life; and which, if they did not, in a little time would cease anyway. They are as the Lord says “*but are not able to kill the soul*” which is immortal and immaterial which, cannot be touched by weapons, or any instruments of violence. Because it is immortal, it survives the body, and lives in an eternal non-material state outside of time and space. There in Heaven is happiness and bliss with the Lord Jesus, while the body is in a state of death: *but rather fear him which is able to destroy both body and soul in hell*. This is a description of God, and of his power, who is able to do that which men are not: all that they can do, by divine permission, is to kill the body; but He is able to *destroy*, that is, to torment and punish both body and soul *in hell*, in everlasting burnings. It is important to realize that the Bible teaches that neither soul nor body will be annihilated. There is no such doctrine. All persons who have lived will be resurrected and all souls will be in eternity, some to eternal bliss and some to eternal damnation.

It is very necessary to realize this. *The unjust man is an abomination to the righteous; And he that is upright in the way is and abomination to the wicked.*

Proverbs 29:25–27

*<sup>25</sup>The fear of man bringeth a snare; But whoso putteth his trust in Jehovah shall be safe. <sup>26</sup>Many seek the ruler’s favor; But a man’s judgment cometh from Jehovah. <sup>27</sup>An unjust man is an abomination to the righteous; And he that is upright in the way is and abomination to the wicked (ASV, 1901).*

Next message: CHRISTIAN SEPARATION

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